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**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**  
Washington, DC 20515-0526

COMMITTEE ON VETERANS' AFFAIRS  
RANKING MEMBER, SUBCOMMITTEE ON HEALTH  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY

COMMITTEE ON SCIENCE,  
SPACE, AND TECHNOLOGY  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON SPACE

March 14, 2013

The Honorable Michael Huerta  
Administrator  
Federal Aviation Administration  
800 Independence Avenue SW  
Washington, DC 20591-0001

Dear Administrator Huerta:

I write to express my concerns about the difficult choices that the sequester has forced FAA to make regarding the safety of our national airspace. Clearly, Congress must pass balanced legislation to provide FAA with adequate resources to ensure the safety of our national airspace. Nevertheless, I write to express my concerns about the specific impact of the sequestration cuts on aviation safety in Ventura County.

The FAA recently announced staffing reductions at the FAA staffed control tower at Camarillo Airport (CMA) and the closure of numerous contract towers, including the federal contract control tower at Oxnard Airport (OXR). Because both CMA and OXR are in close proximity to Naval Base Ventura County (NBVC), these airports share airspace and flight paths. I am deeply concerned that the closure of CMA and OXR will reduce coordination with flight operations at NBVC, putting both our naval personnel and the flying public at a safety risk. Compounding this problem is the closure of other contract towers in the Los Angeles basin area.

I am enclosing correspondence from the Ventura County Director of Airports requesting an exemption for CMA and OXR from the sequestration closures. I fully support this request, and urge FAA to promptly review the safety and job issues outlined by the airport authority.

Thank you in advance for your action on my request.

Sincerely,

JULIA BROWNLEY  
Member of Congress

jb/sw  
Enclosure

WASHINGTON, DC OFFICE:  
1019 LONGWORTH HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING  
WASHINGTON, DC 20515  
PHONE: 202-225-5811  
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OXNARD, CA OFFICE:  
300 EAST ESPLANADE DRIVE, SUITE 470  
OXNARD, CA 93036  
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THOUSAND OAKS, CA OFFICE:  
223 EAST THOUSAND OAKS BOULEVARD, SUITE 411  
THOUSAND OAKS, CA 91360  
PHONE: 805-379-1779  
FAX: 805-379-1798



March 12, 2013

J. David Grizzle  
Chief Operating Officer  
Federal Aviation Administration  
800 Independence Avenue, SW  
Washington, DC 20591

**Re: Request to Exempt Oxnard and Camarillo Airport Control Towers  
from Funding Cessation Due to Sequestration based on Impact on the  
National Interest**

Dear Mr. Grizzle:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the proposed funding cessation that will result in the closing of the Federal Contract Control Tower at Oxnard Airport (OXR) and the FAA staffed Control Tower at Camarillo Airport (CMA). Camarillo Airport is categorized as a National Asset in the FAA's *General Aviation Airports, A National Asset* study conducted last year. I write to you in hopes of keeping these two towers, as well as others, open and that you find other means within the FAA to meet the reduction in federal spending due to sequestration.

Oxnard airport is the only Part 139 airport in Ventura County which is a County of more than 800,000 citizens. Oxnard and Camarillo airports share Class D airspace with Naval Base Ventura County/Pt. Mugu (NTD) and the three airports form a triangle with legs of approximately 5 miles between them. Closing these towers will cause a safety issue due to the lack of coordination between aircraft departing and arriving OXR, CMA, and NTD in close proximity to one another. There were 187,290 recorded annual operations at Oxnard and Camarillo airports as well as tens of thousands of military operations at NTD. The three airports all have instrument procedures that "overlap" the other airports airspace and flight paths. **The safety implications and the reduced coordination with Department of Defense operations demonstrate a negative impact on the National Interest.**

Further, if you analyze the control towers slated for closure in the Los Angeles basin area you will quickly realize that there are as many as 884,593 annual operations conducted at these twelve airports, all of which will no longer benefit from the coordination that is conducted by the control towers (see attached). Of those, 474,522 annual operations are at airports with Contract Towers. These airports lie directly

adjacent and near Los Angeles World Airports (LAX), Bob Hope/Burbank Airport (BUR), Long Beach Airport (LGB), Ontario Airport (ONT), and John Wayne Airport (SNA). THESE FIVE PART 139 AIRPORTS HANDLE APPROXIMATELY 85 MILLION ANNUAL PASSENGERS. This is not the way to minimize the impact on the maximum number of traveling passengers. **The safety implications and the reduced coordination that will result in severe inefficiencies in the Los Angeles airspace are a negative impact on the National Interest.**

The airports mentioned above generate BILLIONS of dollars in positive economic impact every year. All of these airports provide access to the National Airspace System (NAS) and contribute to interstate commerce. **Creating severe inefficiencies by closing the towers will have a negative impact on that economic benefit, causing the slowing of the national economy and is a negative impact on the National Interest.**

These control towers coordinate movements on the ground at each of the airports. The FAA Runway Safety Action Team (RSAT) relies on the towers to coordinate the safe movement of aircraft and separation from vehicles and pedestrians in movement areas. Closing the control towers will result in no control over these ground movements and the likelihood of vehicle pedestrian deviations, taxiway incursions, and runway incursions will increase jeopardizing the safety of pilots and airport tenants. Given the high importance placed on implementing Safety Management Systems (SMS) by the FAA and the National Transportation Safety Board, a Safety Risk Assessment should be conducted at each individual facility prior to any final decisions on closure. The FAA's own internal SMS protocols, which cuts across every line of business in the agency, should be followed. **Again, the safety implications are a negative impact on the National Interest.**

FAA Advisory Circular 150/5370-2F provides for construction safety phasing plans during construction projects at airports. Closing the towers will result in a lack of coordination between airport operations and construction activities and will cause delays in construction projects at airports. **Delaying construction projects will reduce the number of jobs provided by the construction and have a negative impact on the unemployment rate and national economy causing a negative impact on the National Interest. Further, it will impact safety between airport operations and construction on airports.**

Sequestration is designed to result in an across the board cut on federal programs, yet the Federal Contract Tower Program is being proposed to be cut by 75%. This is an unfair and discriminatory action on a program that saves the FAA millions of dollars a year. In this crucial time for general aviation where there is an aging pilot population, high fuel prices, environmental pressures regarding 100LL fuel, it seems to me that the FAA should be doing all it can to support keeping the control towers open which will benefit the safety of all aviation. Student pilots are required to fly into an airport with an operating control tower as part of their training. Should we now send the student pilots to LAX, BUR, LGB, ONT, and SNA to conduct their training? **Closing the towers will**

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**make the aviation industry less safe, inefficient, and therefore less inviting to new pilots and cripple the future of the industry creating a negative impact on the National Interest.**

Thank you for your consideration of these comments. As you can see, the County of Ventura feels strongly that closing either or both of the control towers in our County impacts the National Interest. I may be reached at 805-388-4200 with any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'TODD L. McNAMEE', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

TODD L. McNAMEE, AAE  
Director of Airports

Attachments:

ATADs Report for LA Basin Contract Tower Operations  
ATADs Report for LA Basin FAA and Contract Towers Operations  
Diagram showing location of proposed 12 tower closures (red) and five Part 139 airports (green)

## ATADS : Airport Operations : Standard Report

From 01/2012 To 12/2012 | Filter by: FUL, HHR, OXR, PMD, RAL, VCV, WHP, WJF

Calendar Year	State	Facility	Service Area	Region	Class	IFR Itinerant					Itinerant					Local			Total Operations
						Air Carrier	Air Taxi	General Aviation	Military	Total	Air Carrier	Air Taxi	General Aviation	Military	Total	Civil	Military	Total	
2012	CA	FUL	WT	AWP	Federal Contract Tower	3	7	3,576	3	3,589	3	167	40,841	10	41,021	17,287	0	17,287	58,308
2012	CA	HHR	WT	AWP	Federal Contract Tower	0	560	2,979	18	3,557	0	1,580	39,942	386	41,908	31,098	38	31,136	73,044
2012	CA	OXR	WT	AWP	Federal Contract Tower	0	1,808	7,240	107	9,155	0	4,079	24,233	169	28,481	25,940	190	26,130	54,611
2012	CA	PMD	WT	AWP	Federal Contract Tower	128	170	6,210	6,196	12,704	130	175	9,080	6,645	16,030	1,078	11,074	12,152	28,182
2012	CA	RAL	WT	AWP	Federal Contract Tower	0	77	7,006	49	7,132	0	175	36,530	118	36,823	35,155	47	35,202	72,025
2012	CA	VCV	WT	AWP	Federal Contract Tower	1,353	112	3,509	1,358	6,332	1,357	1,413	14,061	3,925	20,756	16,107	26,416	42,523	63,279
2012	CA	WHP	WT	AWP	Federal Contract Tower	0	0	651	0	651	0	0	38,082	4	38,086	33,318	116	33,434	71,520
2012	CA	WJF	WT	AWP	Federal Contract Tower	1	335	1,534	280	2,150	1	1,522	27,811	1,034	30,368	22,679	505	23,185	63,553
Sub-Total for Unknown						1,485	3,069	32,705	8,021	45,280	1,491	9,111	230,580	12,291	253,473	182,662	38,387	221,049	474,522
Sub-Total for AWP						1,485	3,069	32,705	8,021	45,280	1,491	9,111	230,580	12,291	253,473	182,662	38,387	221,049	474,522
Sub-Total for WT						1,485	3,069	32,705	8,021	45,280	1,491	9,111	230,580	12,291	253,473	182,662	38,387	221,049	474,522
Sub-Total for CA						1,485	3,069	32,705	8,021	45,280	1,491	9,111	230,580	12,291	253,473	182,662	38,387	221,049	474,522
Sub-Total for 2012						1,485	3,069	32,705	8,021	45,280	1,491	9,111	230,580	12,291	253,473	182,662	38,387	221,049	474,522
Total:						1,485	3,069	32,705	8,021	45,280	1,491	9,111	230,580	12,291	253,473	182,662	38,387	221,049	474,522

Report created on Thu Mar 7 15:59:20 EST 2013  
 Sources: Air Traffic Activity System (ATADS)

# ATADS : Airport Operations : Standard Report

From 01/2012 To 12/2012 | Facility: FUL, HHR, OXR, PMD, RAL, VCV, WHP, CMA, TMI, POC, SMO, WJF

Calendar Year	State	Facility	Service Area	Region	Class	IFR Itinerant					Itinerant					Local			Total Operations
						Air Carrier	Air Taxi	General Aviation	Military	Total	Air Carrier	Air Taxi	General Aviation	Military	Total	Civil	Military	Total	
2012	CA	CMA	WT	AWP	Towers with Radar	0	2,073	12,768	52	14,893	0	3,266	66,985	114	69,365	63,208	109	63,314	132,679
2012	CA	EMT	WT	AWP	Towers with Radar	0	474	3,188	16	3,688	23	833	36,720	85	37,341	46,440	56	46,496	84,137
Sub-Total for Unknown						8	2,547	15,956	68	18,579	23	4,119	102,665	199	107,008	109,645	165	109,810	216,816
2012	CA	FUL	WT	AWP	Federal Contract Tower	3	7	3,576	3	3,589	3	167	40,641	10	41,021	17,287	0	17,287	58,308
2012	CA	HHR	WT	AWP	Federal Contract Tower	0	560	2,979	16	3,557	0	1,580	39,942	386	41,908	31,098	38	31,136	73,044
2012	CA	OXR	WT	AWP	Federal Contract Tower	0	1,808	7,240	107	9,155	0	4,079	24,233	169	28,481	25,940	190	26,130	54,611
2012	CA	PMD	WT	AWP	Federal Contract Tower	128	170	6,210	6,196	12,704	130	176	9,060	6,645	16,039	1,078	11,074	12,152	28,182
Sub-Total for Unknown						131	2,545	20,005	6,324	29,005	133	6,001	114,096	7,210	127,440	75,403	11,302	86,705	214,145
2012	CA	POC	WT	AWP	Towers with Radar	13	64	5,067	38	5,832	30	152	38,357	180	38,719	51,050	208	51,258	89,977
2012	CA	RAL	WT	AWP	Federal Contract Tower	0	77	7,006	49	7,132	0	176	36,530	118	36,823	35,155	47	35,202	72,025
2012	CA	SMO	WT	AWP	Towers with Radar	30	6,640	17,750	56	24,476	45	6,687	62,218	87	69,037	34,240	1	34,241	103,278
2012	CA	VCV	WT	AWP	Federal Contract Tower	1,353	112	3,509	1,358	6,332	1,357	1,413	14,061	3,925	20,756	18,107	26,416	42,523	61,279
2012	CA	WHP	WT	AWP	Federal Contract Tower	0	0	651	0	651	0	0	36,082	4	36,086	33,318	116	33,434	71,520
2012	CA	WJF	WT	AWP	Federal Contract Tower	1	335	1,534	290	2,160	1	1,522	27,811	1,034	30,368	22,676	506	23,185	53,553
Sub-Total for Unknown						1,354	447	5,694	1,648	9,143	1,358	2,935	79,954	4,963	89,210	72,104	27,036	99,142	168,352
Sub-Total for AWP						1,536	12,320	72,078	8,233	94,167	1,589	20,069	433,820	12,757	468,235	377,597	38,761	416,358	884,593
Sub-Total for WT						1,536	12,320	72,078	8,233	94,167	1,589	20,069	433,820	12,757	468,235	377,597	38,761	416,358	884,593
Sub-Total for CA						1,536	12,320	72,078	8,233	94,167	1,589	20,069	433,820	12,757	468,235	377,597	38,761	416,358	884,593
Sub-Total for 2012						1,536	12,320	72,078	8,233	94,167	1,589	20,069	433,820	12,757	468,235	377,597	38,761	416,358	884,593
Total:						1,536	12,320	72,078	8,233	94,167	1,589	20,069	433,820	12,757	468,235	377,597	38,761	416,358	884,593

Report created on Thu Mar 7 15:55:13 EDT 2013  
 Sources: A - Traffic Activity System (ATADS)

